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TRENTON BARRACKS

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SKETCH

of the

TRENTON BARRACKS

— New Jersey —

By

Edwin Robert Walker

1911



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THE ABOVE DRAWING REPRESENTS
THE OLD BARRACKS AS THEY WERE
ERECTED IN 1758 - 9, AND AS
THEY CONTINUED TO EXIST UNTIL
1813: THE ORIGINAL HOUSE ON THE
RIGHT WAS THE OFFICERS QUARTERS



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THE ORIGINAL HOUSE OF THE
OFFICERS QUARTERS AS IT
WAS IN 1758 - 9.



THE ABOVE DRAWING REPRESENTS
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1813: THE ORIGINAL HOUSE ON THE
RIGHT WAS THE OFFICERS QUARTERS



VICE CHANCELLOR WALKER PRESENTS DRAWING OF OLD BARRACKS TO ASSOCIATION

Reproduction of Original Structure is Made by Art School Man Under Direction of Mr. Walker, Who Also Offers Comprehensive
Historical Sketch

Vice Chancellor Edwin Robert Walker, at a meeting of the Old Barracks Association today, presented to that organization a beautiful drawing of the Old Barracks showing the structure as it stood when first erected, before its partial dismantlement to make way for Front Street.

The drawing was made at Mr. Walker's direction by Henry R. MacGinnis of the School of Industrial Arts. On presenting the picture Mr. Walker offered a comprehensive historical sketch of the famous old building.

The Old Barracks Association is composed of the following ladies:

President, Mrs. J. Murray Forst; vice president, Mrs. John A. Sloan; secretary, Mrs. Harvey M. Voorhees; treasurer, Mrs. Edwin Robert Walker; trustees, Mrs. Henry W. Green, Mrs. Welling G. Sichel, Mrs. Thomas Winans, Mrs. John L. Kuser, Mrs. Frank S. Katzenbach, Sr., Mrs. Cornelius Hook, Mrs. Maria H. Conard, Mrs. John D. Faussett, Mrs. S. Duncan Oliphant, Mrs. Jonathan H. Blackwell, Mrs. James M. Green and Mrs. A. C. Oliphant.

The members are: Mrs. S. C. Allison, Mrs. Josephine Y. Breese, Mrs. J. H. Blackwell, Miss Clara Blackwell, Mrs. J. C. Bloom, Mrs. W. H. Brokaw, Mrs. William E. Bissell, Mrs. Thomas Craven, Mrs. Charles H. Cook, Mrs. Maria Conard, Mrs. James O. Clephans, Miss Anna L. Dayton, Mrs. William L. Dayton, Mrs. C. B. Dahlgren, Mrs. S. M. Dickinson, Mrs. Edward S. Dunham, Mrs. Daniel J. Bechtel, Mrs. W. Meredith Dickinson, Miss Amy Edwards, Mrs. T. J. Falkenburg, Mrs. J. Murray Forst, Mrs. John D. Faussett, Mrs. A. D. Forst, Mrs. George M. Foster, Mrs. Anna W. Gidding.

Mrs. Elmer E. Green, Mrs. Henry W. Green, Mrs. James M. Green, Mrs. J. F. Godley, Mrs. Barker Gummere, Mrs. Cornelius Hook, Mrs. John R. Hill, Mrs. Hugh H. Hilson, Mrs. Alexander F. Jamieson, Miss S. L. Kean, Mrs. John L. Kuser, Mrs. F. S. Katzenbach, Sr., Mrs. William C. Lawrence, Mrs. Alfred W. Lawshe, Mrs. Watson H. Linburg, Miss Mary M. Moore, Mrs. Henry C. Moore, Mrs. F. N. R. Montgomery, Mrs. Owen Moon, Jr., Mrs. E. C. Manning, Mrs. R. C. Maxwell, Mrs. S. D. Oliphant, Mrs. Alexander C. Oliphant, Mrs. John W. Pinkham, Mrs. A. A. Post, Mrs. James E. Pope.

Mrs. Washington Roebeling, Mrs. Edwin W. Rogers, Miss Mary Richey, Mrs. Elmer H. Rogers, Mrs. James F. Rusting, Mrs. William S. Stryker, Mrs. Mercer Surver, Mrs. W. G. Sichel, Mrs. A. A. Shaw, Mrs. J. H. Tetter, Mrs. W. J. Taylor, Mrs. Joseph Thompson, Mrs. Robert Trentach, Mrs. H. M.

Voorhees, Mrs. E. R. Walker, Mrs. Thomas Winans, Miss Sarah Wood, Miss Ellen P. Wood, Mrs. George B. Yard.

The Vice Chancellor's sketch accompanying the drawing follows:

To the Old Barracks Association, Trenton, New Jersey, Mrs. J. Murray Forst, President.

Dear Madame—Ever since the unveiling of the tablets at the Old Barracks on June 20, 1909, in which ceremonies I had the honor to participate, I have thought that your Association should be in possession of a picture of the structure as it stood when first erected and before its partial dismantlement by the opening of Front Street westerly from Willow Street, and the conversion of the northerly wing running eastward into dwelling houses. A fact not hitherto generally known and concerning which the belief has been both ways, is, that the old Colonial stone and brick dwelling house on the northwest corner of Front and Willow streets was part and parcel of the original Barracks and was the officers' quarters. My idea of the desirability of the Association having a picture of the historic structure has crystallized into practical form, and I have had an accurate drawing of it made by Mr. Henry R. MacGinnis, of the School of Industrial Arts, which drawing I herewith present to the Association, and beg its acceptance at their hands. The picture as you will notice exhibits the Barracks as they originally stood, and also shows the portion still standing, now owned and preserved by your Association.

On this occasion it seems to me fitting that some account of the historic old structure should be given that it may be preserved in concrete form and save trouble hereafter to those who would explore the various sources of information which I have examined in order to write a succinct and veritable history of these Barracks. Therefore, with your leave, I will now proceed to an account of this matter, pointing out the source of authority for every fact disclosed, that it may be easily verified.

The reason for the building of the Barracks was set forth in my address on the occasion of the tablets ceremonies in which I said: For a time preceding the year 1757, the war cry of the allies of France was heard upon the then frontier of our country; in parts now accessible in a few hours by our modern methods of transportation, but then remote. Borne of their fears, the desire of the colonists that suitable protection be afforded against the expected incursions of the savage Indians, found expression in petitions to the Legislature for the erection of barracks, in which to house the troops of Britain and of the colony, mobilized for defensive purposes, and at the same time to ease the burden of supporting soldiers, quartered in the houses of the

prayers of the petitions the Legislature made an appropriation for the erection of these very Barracks among others, and they stand today, if not the only certainly the best preserved, of the defensive fortresses built in 1757-1758.

I should have stated that a portion of the Barracks stood as originally erected. I now know that that was the only ones standing in anything like their pristine condition.

In the winter of 1757, a petition was sent to the general assembly of the Providence by magistrates, freeholders and inhabitants of the town of Trenton, and other places adjacent in the county of Hunterdon, which recited:

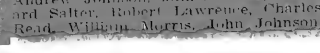
"That altho we your Petitioners do with truly loyal and grateful Hearts acknowledge how much we Owe to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and his Parliament, for furnishing us with repeated supplies of Troops at this Critical Juncture of Affairs when our all is threatened and endangered by our Inveterate and Potent Enemy, in Conjunction with surrounding nations of Cruel and deceitful Savages, and also how we are cheerfully willing to exert the utmost of our power to render these his Majesties Troops perfectly useful, and to answer the just end for which they were designed, in proportion to the number that shall from time to time fall to our share to support; Yet such is the Situation of Trenton being so great a thoroughfare, and consequently so many soldiers continually passing and repassing upon their several commands and Quartered upon us Night and day, that unless by the Assistance of this Honourable House we can by some wholesome Law and legal Remedy be eased of this present Distress, the Country will be no longer able to bear the Burden, nor the Officers have it in their Power to keep their stragling Soldiers under due Command and Subjection."

"I shall not take upon us to dictate to this Honourable House what should be the method of this Remedy, but hope we may presume to offer our Sentiments, that if we could be provided with convenient Barracks, it would answer all ends both as to the convenience and safety that would redound to the Troops, as well as the great ease and advantage it would be to the Subject."

"We therefore, your Petitioners Humbly request that this Honourable House would speedily take it into Consideration and enable us to erect and Build such sufficient and Convenient Barracks for the purpose aforesaid or to give us such other adequate Remedy, in such Measure, and with such Power & Authority, and with such Clauses, Provisions and Resolutions as to this Honourable House, in their wisdom shall think meet and fitt. "And your Petitioners as in duty Bound shall ever Pray, &c."

This petition was signed by persons, many of whom have descendants now living in Trenton and vicinity, and I believe it will be of interest to have the signers' names fully copied and set out. For convenience I have arranged them alphabetically. They are as follows:

Alex Anderson	Aza'h Hunt
John Anderson	Willson Hunt
Josiah Appleford	Neal Leviston
Charles Axford, Jr.	Thomas Moore
Daniel Bealergau	W. Morris
Benjamin B. B. B.	Charles Baxton
Edman Beakes	Edw. Pettit
Jno. Barnes	Jos. Phillips
Gideon Bickord	David Price

[illegible]

The Barracks, as you know, were erected in the form of three sides of a hollow square, the main building running north and south with two wings, one at the northern end and one at the southern end, the latter extending eastward. General Straker says it was built entirely of stone, undressed, two stories in height, the main building 130 feet in length and 18½ feet in width, with two wings each 58 feet in length. The time between the completion of the Barracks in March 1759 until December, when the addition for the officers was built, and when the building must have resembled the only one of the kind in existence, is not published, namely, three sides of a hollow square with wings of equal dimensions is a period of months only after which time until the partial demolition of the building for the opening

the Act of Parliament above referred to. We do humbly recommend it to your Majesty to signify your Royal disallowance of this Act.

Which is most humbly submitted
Whitehall
May 5th 1767.

Clare
Geo: Rice
Wm Fitzherbert
Thos Robinson.

At a Court at St. James's the 13th
day of May 1767.

Present

(Seal of the
Privy
Council)

The Kings Most Excellent
Majesty

His Royal High- Earl of Har-
ness court

the Duke of York Earl of Ilchester

ArchBishop Earl of Besbor-
Canterbury ough

Lord President, Earl of Hillsbor-
ough

Duke of Bolton Earl of Shel-
burne

Duke of Queens Viscount Fal-
mouth

Duke of Argyll Viscount Clare

Marquis of Viscount Clare

Granby Bishop of Lon-
don

Lord Steward Lord Berkley of
Stratton

Lord Chamber- Lord Bathurst

lain Lord Sandys

Earl of Denbigh Lord Treasurer of
the Household

Earl of Shaftes- Jas Stuart Mc-
bury Kenzie Esqr

Earl of March- Wellbore Ellis
mont Esqr

Earl of Bristol Sir Gilbert Elliot
Master of the
Rolls

Whereas by Commission under
the Great Seal of Great Britain,
the Governor Council and As-
sembly of his Majesty's Province
of New Jersey are authorized and
impowered to make, constitute
and Ordain, Laws, Statutes and
Ordinances, for the publick Peace,
Welfare and good Government of
the said Province; which Laws,
Statutes and Ordinances are to be,
as near as conveniently may be,
agreeable to the Laws and Statutes
of this Kingdom; and to be trans-
mitted for his Majesty's Royal ap-
probation or disallowance. And
Whereas in pursuance of the said
Powers An Act was passed in the
said Province in 1766 and trans-
mitted Entitled as follows, vizt

'An Act appointing Commissioners
for supplying the several Bar-
racks Erected in this Colony with
'Furniture and other necessaries
for accommodating the Kings
'Troops in or marching thro' this
'Colony and for defraying other in-
'cidental Charges.'

Which Act having been perused
and considered by the Lords Com-
missrs for Trade and Plantations
and by them presented to his Ma-
jesty at this Board as proper
to be disallowed, his Ma-
jesty was thereupon this Day
pleased, with the Advice of his
Privy Council to Declare his dis-
allowance of the said Act. And
pursuant to his Majesty's Royal
Pleasure thereupon Expressed, the
said Act is hereby disallowed, de-
clared Void and of none Effect
Whereof the Governor or Com-
mander in Chief of his Majesty's sd

Province of New Jersey for the
time being, and all others whom
it may concern, are to take notice
and govern themselves accord-
ingly."

(See Journal of Governor and Coun-
cil, N. J. Archives, vol. 17, page 459).

Returning to the subject of our na-
rative I perhaps cannot better tell
of the use and occupation of the Barracks
during the Revolutionary War than by
here inserting that part of the inscrip-
tion on the inside table above re-
ferred to, which covers the revolution-
ary period, and is as follows:

"For a short time preceding the
battles of Trenton and Assunpink
(the Barracks) was occupied by
British troops, Hessians, Provin-
cial recruits for the service of
the Crown, and Tory refugees, and
during the remainder of the war
by troops of the Continental Line,
State Militia and their French
Allies."

For three years after the war of the
revolution the Barracks were dis-
cused, and on June 1, 1786, the Legis-
lature directed the commissioners of
this State to sell all the barracks and
lands attached to them. (The Old
Barracks, &c., page 14).

By deed dated February 18, 1787
(Hunterdon County clerk's office, vol-
ume 1 of deeds at page 222), Moore
Furman, one of the commissioners for
the State to sell the Barracks to
William Ogden and William Patterson.
Moore Furman was a distin-
guished Jerseyman of the late colonial
and early state epochs. He was
Deputy Quarter Master General of the
New Jersey State Troops during the
Revolutionary War and was an all
round man of affairs. One of his
descendants was the late Capt. Wil-
liam E. Hunt, of the United States
Navy, and his present day descendants
in Trenton are of the families of
Green, Hilsen and Melville. Some
five years after he sold the Barracks
to the Commissioners for the State, Moore
Furman acquired the property indi-
vidually by conveyance from William
Ogden and William Patterson and their
wives, by deed dated March 30, 1792,
(Hunterdon County clerk's office, vol-
ume 1 of deeds, page 661). The old
Barracks and their grounds have at
all times since the last mentioned date
been owned by private individuals,
first in their entirety, and afterwards
in divided form.

In the course of my investigation
I endeavored to ascertain the exact
date of the demolition of that part of
the Barracks through which Front
Street was extended when it crossed west-
ward from Willow Street to Delaware
Street, General Stryker in his "Old Bar-
racks at Trenton," page 14, says that
this was done in the year 1813. I
endeavored to ascertain the exact date
in 1813, and the source of authority
for the extension of Front Street, and
with the assistance of Mr. Harry B.
Salter, city clerk of Trenton, I ex-
amined all the records of common
council for that year (1813) but found
nothing relating to Front Street. With
the aid of Mr. Abram Swan, Jr., city
engineer, I examined the old atlases
and maps in his office, but we could
find nothing bearing on the question.
Mr. John D. Faussett, assistant state
librarian, very kindly examined the
files of the newspapers covering every
period during which the street may
have been opened, so far as any state-
ment recorded in print seemed to in-
dicate, but found nothing on the sub-
ject. I desire to make my acknowl-
edgements to Mr. Faussett for his

and other assistance in making re-
search concerning the matter treated of
in this article.

In Raumb's History of Trenton, at
p. 271, it is said that Front Street was
continued to the State House yard
directly through the Old Barracks in
1801, making two separate buildings of
it instead of one as theretofore.

This diversity of dates between Gen.
Stryker and Mr. Raumb perplexed me
and I undertook by a search of the
records for conveyances both here and
at Flemington, Hunterdon County, for
you know that Trenton was Hunter-
terdon until Mercer County was formed
in 1838, to ascertain when lots were
first conveyed on Front Street includ-
ing any part of the old Barracks, in
the hope and expectation of finding
that the street was laid out as a private
enterprise by the owner of the
entire tract, and not by virtue of any
public authority, and thus, approxi-
mately at least, to ascertain the date
of its opening. In this I was disap-
pointed, as a break in the record title
occurs between the years 1792 and
1815. The last recorded conveyance
of the Barracks lot to any one was
that to Moore Furman in 1792, above
mentioned. The next conveyance of
any part of the premises was in 1815,
and is made by the heirs of Samuel W.
Stockton. There is no conveyance of
record here or at Flemington showing
any divestiture of title out of Moore
Furman or any devolution of title upon
Samuel W. Stockton. I am indebted
to John T. Temple and Alexander
Trapp, Esqs., lawyers, of this city, for
most extensive and laborious searches
of the records at Trenton and Flem-
ington with regard to this matter.
They, however, found that in 1793 the
surveyors of the highway under and
by virtue of proceedings in the Hun-
terdon County Court of Common Pleas
laid out Front Street westerly from
Willow Street to the State House lot
as a highway, the lines of which passed
through the Old Barracks. This is
perfectly apparent from the beginning
of the new road, and its location
as described in the return of the sur-
veyors, corresponding as it does with
the courses in deeds of lands bordering
on the street. A copy of the return
taken from Road Book "A," Hun-
terdon County, page 187, is as follows:

"Road fr. ye end of
Front Street in)
Trenton to ye State)
House Lot, &c."

We the Surveyors of the High-
ways of the Townships of Tren-
ton, Maidenhead & Hopewell, be-
ing legally called by order of the
Inferior Court of Common Pleas
for the County of Common Pleas
to lay a road from the end of Front Street
in the City of Trenton to the State
House Lot, & we after viewing
the premises & hearing the allega-
tions of all parties do agree to lay
a road forty-two feet wide as fol-
lows: Beginning at the end of
Front Street afd. near the Bar-
racks from thence running in the
middle of the Road North seventy
degrees west, four chains & set-
tling links to the State House Lot,
thence North twenty-two degrees
East, three chains & forty-nine
links out into the road that leads
from Abram Hunt's to Beatty's
ferry and that the said road be
opened on or before the first day
of September next.

And we the said Surveyors being
also called by the afd. order to
vacate a certain Alley running be-
tween the Lots of Abr. Apple-
ton & Isaac Peace, and we do agree

to take up & vacate the s'd alley as follows. Beginning at the end of said Alley at the Southeast corner of said Abr. Appleton's Lott & we do agree to take up & vacate the same until it intersects the afd' new road, in witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands & seals May 27th, 1793.

John Riggs, (L. S.)
Israel Moore, (L. S.)
Theophilus Phillips (L. S.)
John Stevens, (L. S.)
Andrew Smith, (L. S.)
John Temple, (L. S.)

Recorded May 28th, 1793."

Notwithstanding the laying out of the road to be opened on or before September 1, 1793, it seems not to have been accomplished in fact, at least not through the Barracks building, until 1813, although portions of Front Street were certainly opened between Willow and Delaware Streets prior to that year, because by a deed made in 1809 property was conveyed on the lower side of Front Street, east of the Barracks, one line of which ran to the "Barracks lot," and by a deed made in 1811 property was conveyed on the north side of Front Street by a line running from Delaware Street westerly about eighty feet which, of course, did not extend east as far as the "Barracks lot" proper. In view of these facts, and others which will be hereafter mentioned, I am of the opinion that General Stryker was right in his assertion that the street was actually opened through the Barracks in 1813, because: (1) he was an eminent historical authority; (2) he wrote his account 26 years ago and had better facilities than I, at least traditionally, and probably documentary, to enable him to ascertain the fact; (3) Mr. Raum was not as thorough and accurate as General Stryker. What precedes Mr. Raum's assertion that Front Street was opened west of Willow Street in 1801 is this: he says the buildings known as White Hall (Old Barracks) were erected by the King as barracks for his officers. This we know is a mistake. The King never erected the Barracks, nor was his permission even asked. They were erected exclusively by the colony and maintained for its defence. True, they housed the soldiers of the King, but were not built exclusively for officers. Then again, in describing the building Mr. Raum says it commenced at Willow Street, extended west toward the State House, hence ran south crossing Front Street, thence taking an easterly direction terminated again at Willow Street, forming three sides of a hollow square. As Front Street, by his own assertion, was not opened until 1801, the Barracks running south in 1758 could not have crossed that street, unless he means they crossed what is now Front Street. The description, if not inaccurate, is certainly loose. Therefore I say that General Stryker's date should be given the preference, and as no information is obtainable showing any other date as the time of the actual demolition of the walls of the building to admit of the extension of Front Street, that year, 1813, should, I think, unhesitatingly be accepted as the true date of the event.

It must be a source of pride to Trenton that the Barracks here are the only ones of the five erected that are preserved in anything like original form and appearance. I have made inquiry of gentlemen living in the other cities where barracks were erected, namely, former Chancellor, Magle of Elizabeth,

Captain James Parker of Perth Amboy, Mr. Henry S. Haines of Burlington, surveyor general of West New Jersey, and Mr. William H. Benedict of New Brunswick, and learn from them that the old barracks in their respective towns are totally demolished, with one exception and that is in Burlington where but fragments of the original structure remain. These remnants of barracks are incorporated into St. Paul's Catholic Church and Parochial School, Burlington. They consist of the extreme end of the wings of the barracks, one being the rear portion of the church and the other the rear of the school. The barracks there, unlike those at Trenton, were built of brick instead of stone. Mr. Francis B. Lee and I visited Burlington and inspected the remains of its barracks in company with Mr. Henry S. Haines, during the month of December last (1910). Mr. Lee gave it as his opinion that the barracks in the Burlington barracks were built of bricks because bricks were manufactured in that locality at that time and no stone quarries existed in the neighborhood. At Trenton, as we know, there are numerous quarries, one or more of which were open in pre-revolutionary days.

Besides the old mansion on the corner, that part of the Barracks which was the north wing proper is now incorporated into the three dwelling houses to the west of the mansion, being Nos. 106, 108 and 110 West Front Street. The two houses adjoining the mansion are under the original Barracks' roof is as plainly to be seen by a mere inspection, and by comparison with the roof on the old building which is intact on the south side of the street. The most westerly house is extended several feet into Front Street and built above the original Barracks' roof. The lower west wall however, of this building and the rear walls of all of them are of the original structure of 1758.

It will be noticed by even a casual observer that the front wall of the mansion and the two adjoining houses on the west are of brick instead of stone, and the question arises were the buildings thus constructed originally, or were they altered at or after the time of the extension of Front Street? Mr. Jules S. Ferriot, a mason builder of this city, at my request made a careful inspection of these buildings and gives it as his unqualified opinion that the brick walls were not originally incorporated in them, but were put in afterwards. This, coupled with General Stryker's assertion that the building was "entirely" of stone, seems to abundantly show that the brick walls must have been of later origin than the structure itself. Another evidence that the brick walls were put in at or after the alteration of the Barracks is this: When the change was made a new front wall had to be supplied to the most westerly part of the building on the north side of Front Street, and the wall when built extended into the street on a line with the officers' quarters, on the east, leaving the intermediate building a few feet back in recess, as the two houses composing it exist today. The front of the most westerly house wall was of brick Maj. Samuel S. Armstrong has informed me, and says he remembers his father, the late Horatio C. Armstrong, covering it with stucco and raising the roof another story in the year 1863.

My theory is that when Front Street was extended and the north wing of the Barracks including the officers' quarters was detached and turned into

residences, the brick walls were put on the fronts by the then owner or owner to give them a more modern appearance and to dissociate them as much as possible from the old Barracks, which they had been an integral part of, thus dreaming that that association would be a desideratum in future generations.

A matter barely mentioned, which is of interest, is the fact that the Barracks have been known to that extent as White Hall. Referenced by that name is to be found frequently in old conveyances. Look in his Field Book of the Revolution, vol. 2, page 244, makes mention of the building by that name and presents a sketch of it made by himself on his visit to Trenton in search of historic data in the year 1849.

Some of the pictures of the Old Barracks that have heretofore appeared have shown it with plain walls running from the ground to the overhanging eaves of its roof, and some have shown it with a balcony between the first and second stories on the inner sides of the square. That the balcony existed there is the most cogent proof. A glance at the walls facing north and east of the detached portion on the south side of Front Street will disclose the ends of the second floor joists on a line with the second floor. These joists are close together and thus gave the balcony great strength, which was required. The fact, coupled with the pictures which amount to corroborating evidence, establish, beyond doubt the fact of the existence of the balcony in the early days of the structure, and, therefore, have had the balcony incorporated in the drawing which I send you. Another thing: Mr. MacGinnis, who drew the picture, discovered the exact number of posts that supported the balcony and has correctly reproduced them. These marks are still visible under the eaves of the remaining roof and indicate the entire number originally existing.

Before leaving the subject I desire to express my thanks to Judge Garret D. W. Vroom, Francis E. Lee, Esq., and William Nelson, Esq., corresponding secretary of the New Jersey Historical Society, for valuable information and suggestions with reference to the subject of this article.

I will trespass upon your time to exploit but a single other thought, and one for which I claim no originality, one that has been rather wished for, but one that is perfectly feasible, and may some day be an accomplished reality. It is the restoration of the old Barracks to their original condition. The Independence Hall, the historic old State House in Philadelphia has been restored, why not the old Barracks at Trenton?

In my address at the unveiling of the tablets I took occasion to remark, that in a humble way it may be said that this building bears something of the same relation to Trenton as does the Tower of London to the historic city of that name. We cannot boast that this stronghold has never fallen into the hands of a foreign foe, as England proudly boasts of her Tower, but we may with pride allude to the fact that within these walls no such frightful scenes of blood and massacre have been enacted as in that gloomy fortress on the banks of the River Thames. Yet, as quite differently, these blood-stained Barracks are associated with hallowed memories of the Revolution,

I think of the possibilities in a derived from a restoration of this historic structure! Within its walls might be instituted an armory, as in the Tower of London, where various weapons used in warfare might be exhibited, especially weapons which are of historic value in themselves. Meetings of patriotic societies could be there held, and innumerable other uses and advantages could be attained. These are but suggestions. This is a fact: If these Barracks were restored they would comprise one of the most, if not the most, historic building in the State of New Jersey! Is this not a matter in which not only the citizens of Trenton but the citizens of the State should take an interest? Are not the old Barracks something for the people of New Jersey to cherish with pride? At least, the Barracks as they now exist will be preserved, and I cannot, I think, more fittingly conclude this article than to again quote from my address at the unveiling of the tablet and say:

If in the calm that succeeded the storm—if during the period that followed the revolutionary struggle—the supporters and defenders of our country, weary of the conflict, turned their hearts and minds to other things, and permitted the ravages of time to obliterate many an object of historic interest, we, their descendants, atone for their sins of omission, and find with an unalterable zeal, are resolved that every remaining relic shall be preserved—a sacred altar! at whose shrine we may worship.

In this spirit these Barracks will be preserved;—preserved in the name of their builders; in the name of their owners;—for all time and for all the people,—a link connecting the martial past with the peaceful present.

Respectfully,

EDWIN ROBERT WALKER.
Trenton, February 6, 1911.

of views conclusively that the building, for enlarging the Capitol on the northwest corner of Front street, is an appropriate time for it to and Willow Streets, and adjoining the Barracks standing on the northerly side of Front Street, is the addition which the late General Stryker says was built in December, 1758, to be used as quarters for the officers who were in command of the troops stationed at the Barracks. Trained lawyer that he is, the Vice-Chancellor was not content to draw conclusions from tradition, but has fortified every statement with documentary, and what may be regarded as almost contemporary, evidence that is uncontrovertible.

In brief, Mr. Walker shows that the Barracks were built in 1758, and partially occupied in December of that year; that the land and the buildings (including the officers' quarters) cost \$23,487.08, 11d; that the buildings were entirely of stone and extended across West Front Street; that the northerly end of the building, and the addition used by the officers, are still standing, though considerably changed from their original appearance; that the buildings were successively occupied by British troops, Hessians, Provincial recruits, Tory refugees, by Continental Line, State Militia and their French allies; that the extension of West Front Street was authorized in 1793 but not perfected until 1813; and that the Trenton Barracks are the only ones of the five erected at the same time, that are preserved in anything like original form and appearance.

Mr. Walker's communication bears evidence of long and painstaking investigation, in which he had the assistance of a number of persons to whom he makes acknowledgement. It will dispose effectually of considerable misinformation that the public has gathered concerning Trenton's historic building. His suggestion that the Barracks be restored to their original condition will receive the hearty endorsement of all Trentonians, who will join in the queries: "Is this not a matter in which not only the citizens of Trenton but the citizens of the State should take an interest? Are not the old Barracks something for the people of New Jersey to cherish with pride?"

The State is caring for the Washington's Headquarters building, at Morristown; the Red Tavern, at Hadfield; buildings at Rocky Hill and Danville; and has spent considerable money for monuments and tablets to mark historic spots, none of which are so great an interest as the Barracks. Now when the State is mak-

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"THE OLD BARRACKS."

Vice-Chancellor Edwin Robert Walker, in a communication to Mrs. J. Murray Foster, president of the "Old Barracks" Association of Trenton, makes an important and highly interesting contribution to the history of the colonial structure on West Front Street,—undoubtedly the oldest building in the city, and one of the oldest in the State. There has never been a question about the date of the erection of the "Barracks," or "White Hall," as it was at one time quite generally known; but there has been doubt as, indeed, there still is, as to the time when Front Street was cut through.

Undoubtedly the most interesting part of Mr. Walker's letter is that in which



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